SOCIO-EMOTIONAL ADJUSTMENT AND GUIDANCE NEEDS OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

SYNOPSIS

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CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

The term ‘learning disability’ refers to a delayed development in one or more of the processes of speech, language, reading, spelling, writing or arithmetic resulting from a possible emotional behavioural disturbance and not from mental retardation, sensory deprivation, cultural or instructional factors (Kirk,1962).

Actually, the terms ‘learning difficulty’ and ‘learning disability’ are to an extent used interchangeably to describe someone who has ‘intellectual functioning that is more limited and is developing or has developed more slowly than is the case for most of the population’. (Thomas and Pierson, 1996). It is clear from the definition that learning disability is the label used for people who function at an intellectual level that is significantly lower than the average people of society.

I.1 CONCEPT OF ADJUSTMENT

Adjustment is the interaction between a person and his environment. In other words both personal and environmental factors work side by side in adjustment. A person’s own adjustment to others and vice versa, both play an important role in his being well-adjusted. During this process the individual and his environment interact with each other and strike a balance. When such a balance happens then we can say that the individual is well-adjusted. If not, we say that the individual is maladjusted. The process of adjustment involves various events and methods that help a student or child to become well-adapted to new situations. It is for the teacher to help the student to face reality and accept himself as he is; especially in the case of learning disabled students who may be facing adjustment crises. The

problems he may be facing could be either at the social level or at the emotional level. However, it is the duty of the teacher to identify such children and help them in time.

I.2 CONCEPT OF SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT

It is seen that the students with learning disabilities have problems in expressing their feelings in a social group. Neither can they control their feelings nor can they calm down easily. It is difficult for them to understand non-verbal cues from others. They are also seen making fun of themselves and do not understand as their faculties of reasoning are not so fine. They cannot understand simple events and happenings. When they realize that others do not understand them they get frustrated and move away. From their behaviour, anxiety and depression are quite evident. This may be because of not being accepted by others in the group. Their erratic behaviour is not accepted by the peers and this causes them to become all the more ill-adjusted in society. They find it difficult to cope up not only in school or work but also other aspects of life. Individuals with learning disabilities may be less observant in their social environment, may misinterpret the social behaviour of others at times, and may not learn as easily from experiences or social cues as their friends. Some children may exhibit an inability or social ineptness due to learning disabilities while seeking acceptance from others. They may become too eager and this may lead them to try too hard and that too in an inappropriate manner.

Many students with learning disabilities have poor social skills. They lack sensitivity to others, have poor perception of social situations, and suffer rejection (Bryan, 1997, Sridhar and Vaughn, 2001, Wong and Donahue, 2002).

I.3 CONCEPT OF EMOTIONAL ADJUSTMENT

The children with learning disabilities are seen to have emotional disturbances. Since they are not allowed to mix up with

other peers it becomes difficult for them to control their emotional behaviour. They are seen with common symptoms like anxiety, depression, obsessive compulsive disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Children with disabilities are seen to have very high impulsiveness. Learning disabled students find it difficult to have friends. Being rejected by their peers makes them believe that they will be isolated or loners in future as well.

Some students with learning disabilities show poor relationship with their teachers compared to those without disabilities. They also show emotional instability. Their unbecoming body language and unpredictable behaviour makes them avoided by others and this factor causes all the more problems.

I.4 CONCEPT OF GUIDANCE

Guidance is a general term which means helping people to make the right choices and solve their own problems which may be educational, vocational or personal. We know that no two individuals are alike. All have different attitudes and talents. Psychological tests have revealed that individuals vary a lot on the basis of their interests, aptitudes, attitudes and skills. Similarly the environment in which we live is different for each person. The perceptions of each person are also different compared to the other. Guidance is the name given to an organized service which helps the individual to understand himself and the world around him by himself. The aim of guidance is that the individual should by himself become aware of his own potentialities, abilities, abilities, aptitudes, interests, perception, needs, purposes, assets and limitations. Strang (1966) gave a comprehensive definition of guidance, “Guidance is a process of helping every individual, through his own efforts, to discover and develop his potentialities.” He gave four important characteristics of the process of guidance as follows

- It is a process of gaining understanding of one’s self.

- It is a process of gaining understanding of one's relationship to other people.
- It is a process of gaining understanding of solving personal problems.
- It is a process of gaining understanding of making decisions.

I.5 CONCEPT OF GUIDANCE NEEDS

Children with learning disabilities find it difficult to be like their peers or the so-called normal students. These children face problems which may be explained by the 'Matthew Effect'. This term has been coined by Stanovich (1986) who has done extensive work on reading ability of learning disabled children. This concept works on the concept of the rich getting richer and poor getting poorer. Here we discuss the concept in terms of the academic potential of children. It is seen that the children who are good keep becoming better with practice and constant reinforcement. While the not so good ones go from bad to worse.

They need to be taken care of and tackled well by their teachers. Since these children are more vulnerable they need special attention from them as well as their parents. They need to be given awareness regarding their careers and outside world, especially the life outside their schools.

I.6 CONCEPT OF LEARNING DISABILITIES

The definition of learning disabilities in the Federal Law IDEA-2004(Individuals with Disability Education Act) is:

The term "specific learning disability" means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, and that disorder may manifest itself in imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell or to do mathematical calculations. Such term includes such conditions as perceptual disabilities, brain

injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. Such term does not include a learning problem, that is primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities; of mental retardation; of emotional disturbance; or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage.

The Merriam Webster Dictionary describes a learning disability as follows “any of various conditions (as dyslexia) that interfere with an individual’s ability to learn and so result in impaired functioning in language, reasoning, or academic skills and that are thought to be caused by difficulties in processing and integrating information”.

The National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities defined disability as: “a heterogeneous group disorders manifested by significant difficulties in the acquisition and use of listening, speaking, reading, writing, reasoning for mathematical abilities. These disorders are intrinsic to the individual and presumed to be due to central nervous system dysfunction. Even though a learning disability may occur concomitantly with other handicapping conditions (e.g. sensory impairment, mental retardation, social and emotional disturbance) or environmental influences (e.g. cultural differences, insufficient/ inappropriate instruction, psychogenic factors) it is not the direct result of those conditions or influences.”

I.6.1 Types of Learning Disabilities

Few types of learning disabilities are discussed as under-

Dyslexia connotes learning disability in reading. The IDEA defines two main types of learning disabilities. It involves foundational skills required to understand the relationship between letter, sounds and words which they represent, Reading comprehension disabilities involve complex thinking such as understanding words, phrases and larger meaning of passages.

Dysgraphia indicates learning disability in writing. The children facing this problem find it difficult to recognize forms in letters on paper and understand relationship between sounds, spoken words and ideas they represent. The handwriting many include reversal of spelling and spelling errors. They have difficulty in language processing and the connection between words and the image it would signify.

Dyscalculia describes learning disability in mathematics. It means all types of math problems ranging from inability to understand the meaning of numbers and inability to apply math principles to solve problems. It may be, like other learning disabilities, believed to be involved with the language and visual processing centers of the brain. Evidences suggest that learning disabilities like dyscalculia may be inherited or can be caused by problems with brain development.

Dysphasia deals with learning disability in communication. This may be the complete or partial impairment of the ability to communicate. It could be a result of brain injury. Verbal communication is derived from several regions located in the language dominant hemisphere of the brain. The basic language functions may be affected, such as comprehension (understanding spoken language), naming (identifying items with words), repetition (repeating words and phrases) and speech.

I.7 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

SOCIO-EMOTIONAL ADJUSTMENT AND GUIDANCE NEEDS OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

I.8 NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

From the review of related literature it is quite clear that no study has been conducted so far to study the socio- emotional adjustment of elementary school children with reference to their learning disabilities and guidance needs in the state of Himachal

Pradesh. This problem needs immediate attention for the benefit of both the learners and teachers. The number of students facing such problems may be in high numbers in various schools located both in rural and urban areas. This study will help in quantifying the extent of such problems of these children and providing assistance accordingly. Remedial steps can then be taken to help such children depending on their specific problems. At present, they are simply labeled as poor and only ignored. Teachers find it useless to waste their time on such students who may not be academically strong. Such students may have other special talents and faculties requiring due attention which otherwise are going waste due to lack of awareness among the teachers. Such students can be made to explore their talents if proper guidance is provided in time to them. This study is targeted towards these children so that new methodologies can be developed keeping in mind their specific needs which are hitherto missing in the state of Himachal Pradesh. The researcher has selected this problem after thorough understanding its gravity and effective results.

I.9 OBJECTIVES

1. To study the difference in the social adjustment of male and female elementary school students of rural areas with learning disabilities.
2. To study the difference in the social adjustment of male and female elementary school students of urban areas with learning disabilities.
3. To study the difference in the social adjustment of male and female elementary school students of rural and urban areas with learning disabilities.
4. To study the difference in the emotional adjustment of male and female elementary school students of rural areas with learning disabilities.

5. To study the difference in the emotional adjustment of male and female elementary school students of urban areas with learning disabilities.
6. To study the difference in the emotional adjustment of male and female elementary school students of rural and urban areas with learning disabilities.
7. To study the difference in the socio-emotional adjustment of male and female elementary school students of rural areas with learning disabilities.
8. To study the difference in the socio-emotional adjustment of male and female elementary school students of urban areas with learning disabilities.
9. To study the difference in the socio-emotional adjustment of male and female elementary school students of rural and urban areas.
10. To study the difference in the guidance needs of male and female elementary school students of rural areas with learning disabilities.
11. To study the difference in guidance needs of male and female elementary school students of urban areas with learning disabilities.
12. To study the difference in the guidance needs of male and female elementary school students of rural and urban areas with learning disabilities.

I.10 HYPOTHESES

To fulfill the objectives of the present investigation the researcher has formulated the following hypotheses:

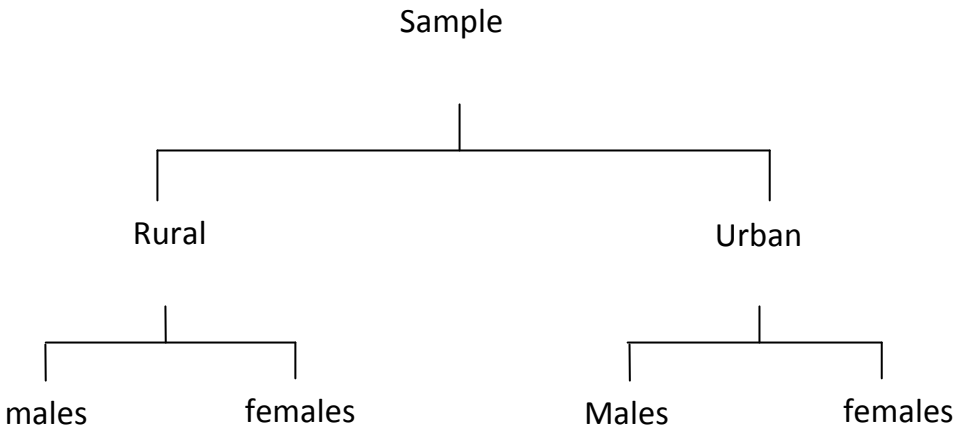
1. There will be no significant difference in the social adjustment of male and female elementary school students of rural areas with learning disabilities.
2. There will be no significant difference in the social adjustment of male and female elementary school students of urban areas with learning disabilities

3. There will be no significant difference in the social adjustment of male and female elementary school students of rural and urban areas with learning disabilities
4. There will be no significant difference in the emotional adjustment of male and female elementary school students of rural areas with learning disabilities
5. There will be no significant difference in the emotional adjustment of male and female elementary school students of urban areas with learning disabilities
6. There will be no significant difference in the emotional adjustment of male and female elementary school students of rural and urban areas with learning disabilities.
7. There will be no significant difference in the socio-emotional adjustment of male and female elementary school students of rural areas with learning disabilities.
8. There will be no significant difference in the socio-emotional adjustment of male and female elementary school students of urban areas with learning disabilities.
9. There will be no significant difference in the socio-emotional adjustment of male and female elementary school students of rural and urban areas with learning disabilities.
10. There will be no significant difference in the guidance needs of male and female elementary school students of rural areas with learning disabilities
11. There will be no significant difference in the guidance needs of male and female elementary school students of urban areas with learning disabilities
12. There will be no significant difference in the guidance needs of male and female elementary school students rural and urban areas with learning disabilities.

I.11 DELIMITATIONS

1. The present study will be delimited to Shimla District of Himachal Pradesh.
2. The study will be delimited to the students of government schools.
3. The study will be further delimited to the students with learning difficulties especially Dyslexia, Dysgraphia, Dyscalculia and Dysphasia only.

LAYOUT OF THE RESEARCH DESIGN FOR SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL AND SOCIO-EMOTIONAL ADJUSTMENT



The same design will be followed for Guidance Needs

CHAPTER-II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Bruce (1980) studied visual memory performance of children with learning disabilities in comparison with children without learning disabilities. It was observed that children with learning disabilities had consistently poor visual memory performance. They had memory deficits due to inefficient memory strategies rather than lack of memory ability. Both types of

children performed well on test of verbal intelligence but differed significantly on measures of reading achievement and visual memory.

Daniels (1996) studied the co-existence of artistic talent and dyslexia. She made a case study of two world renowned artists, Chuck Close and Pat Buckley Moss, who were both dyslexic. She tried to find whether visual abilities needed to read were different from those needed for creative works of art or whether it was a verbal problem. Results showed that artistic talent can co-exist with dyslexia. Dislexia either involves different visual processes from drawing or has a verbal etiology.

Bhardwaj (1997) in his study of adjustment among adolescents found that home, health and emotional adjustment were to be affected by personality traits.

Dalal (1999) studied the adjustment of professional and non-professional students in relation to their self-concept and anxiety. He found that professional male and female students were better in adjustment than non-professional students.

Bajpai (2007) studied parental attitude and adjustment of physically handicapped students and revealed that the attitudes of parents are significantly related to the adjustment of students.

Kausar and Munir (2008) investigated the social and emotional adjustment of adolescents living with single parents and those living with both parents. A sample of 90 adolescents was taken from schools of Rawalpindi (Pakistan). It was revealed that adolescents living with single parents were significantly less socio-emotionally adjusted than their counterparts from intact families. Findings highlighted the significance of family structure in particular, presence of parents for healthy psycho-social development of adolescents.

Patnaik (2011) studied the simultaneous and successive cognitive processes in normal and learning disabled children. (It

was observed that the performance of the children with learning disabilities was inferior to that of normal children). She took ninety normal children from grades 3,5 and 7 and sixty learning disabled children and graded them on the basis of their score on the RCPM (Raven's Coloured Progressive Matrices) and Oriya Reading Comprehension Tests. It was observed that performance of both types of children (i.e. with and without disabilities) improved as a function of grade.

Miglani et al. (2011) conducted a study on the intelligence and achievement motivation among learning disabled children and non-learning disabled children. RSPM (Raven's Successive Progressive Matrices) was used to measure intelligence and GLAD (Grade Level Assessment Device, 1997) was used to measure need for motivation. No significant difference was observed in intelligence, but children without learning disabilities showed higher need for motivation than children with learning disabilities.

Haynes (2011) investigated whether the test –taking strategy would improve performance on math curriculum based assessments of students with disabilities and if students reported an increased sense of math self-efficiency as a result of learning the Test-Taking Strategy (TTS). This study used an experimental, single-subject, multiple-probe, multiple base-line design (Horner and Baer,1978). It was found that this strategy did result in improved performance on CBA (Math quizzes) for some students of the study. However, some students did not increase performance on Math CBA. Findings also indicated most students did not report an increase sense of Math efficiency.

CHAPTER-III

PLAN AND PROCEDURE

III.1 POPULATION

A population refers to any collection of specified group of living beings or non-living beings. The entire number of students with learning disabilities studying in different elementary schools of rural and urban areas will constitute the population for the present study.

III.2 SAMPLE

A sample should be true representative of the entire population and must provide the whole information about the entire population. A sample of elementary school students (males and females) will be taken from different schools/areas. This will be selected through tests, academic records and in consultation with the teachers and peers.

III.3 DATA COLLECTION TOOLS TO BE USED

Socio-Emotional Inventory for elementary school students will be developed and standardized by the investigator herself.

Guidance Needs Inventory for elementary school students will be developed and standardized by the investigator herself.

III.4 STATISTICAL TOOL TO BE USED

To analyze the obtained data ‘t’ test will be used to study the significance of difference between means.

CHAPTER-IV
ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

The data would be analyzed and interpreted as per standard statistical procedures.

CHAPTER-V
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHERRESEARCH

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